

# Battle Creek is open for business.



## *Introducing the Battle Creek Small Business Loan Fund.*

**In Battle Creek, Michigan,** a team of local, regional and national experts are accelerating the focus on economic development. With collaboration already underway, this team is tapping into the local resources of our public, private and philanthropic sectors. *The common goal?* To create a vibrant economic climate in Battle Creek – a place where all children and their families can thrive.

In surveys and community meetings as part of **BCVision**, the people of Battle Creek said that creating quality jobs and small business development were top priorities. Their feedback is aligned with national experts who state: *Two out of three new jobs in the U.S. are created by small businesses.* Battle Creek needs to ramp up our support of the creativity and industry of local businesses and entrepreneurs.

### *What's different?*

Collaboration is the driver, but new and growing businesses need **access to capital**.

That's why the leading edge of this community-wide effort is the \$10 million **Battle Creek Small Business Loan Fund** established by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. With a \$1 million kickoff investment and major contributions from the Kellogg Company, Battle Creek Unlimited (BCU) and The Miller

Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation is matching local investments 2:1. If you're interested in becoming an investor, please contact Terri Govern from Northern Initiatives at: [tgovern@northerninitiatives.org](mailto:tgovern@northerninitiatives.org) or (906 226-1670).

**Northern Initiatives (NI)**, a 25-year-old community development financial institution, manages the fund from its office in downtown Battle Creek, located at 2 West Michigan Avenue. **Kellie Hoffman** is the local loan officer working with interested business owners and entrepreneurs. Prior to joining NI in Sept. 2018, she was a business banker at Comerica Bank for more than a decade, serving the greater Battle Creek market. Kellie can be reached at 269-224-6940.

### *What if I want to start a business?*

Start-up support and **technical assistance** to bring businesses to scale are just as important as capital. While we have local partners who are working in collaboration with Northern Initiatives to support small business development, we also realize that many of our community members need help with actualizing their ideas. In addition, we will soon be announcing an entrepreneurial support organization that will provide support and resources to local entrepreneurs in developing business ideas.





### ***What about overall economic development?***

Resources are one part of economic development but not the whole story. Attracting and cultivating potential partners is key to building economic vitality, too.

In addition to the Battle Creek Small Business Loan Fund and the economic development already in process through the efforts of **Battle Creek Unlimited**, Detroit's **GWJ Group** will be supporting downtown development. Nationally-renowned economic developers **HR&A Advisors** are working across sectors to activate a broad strategy for local economic growth. These experts will be working closely with the **City of Battle Creek** and Battle Creek Unlimited to help accelerate the work that has already started through BCVision.

### ***Who's involved?***

This concentrated effort is just gaining steam but already attracting champions. The City of Battle Creek is drawing its master development plan into the collaboration. Developer Mark Harmsen and the Heritage Tower revitalization project are active participants. Battle Creek Unlimited is in the process of redeveloping three buildings downtown with incentives to attract new businesses, including New Holland Brewery and a new micro-brewery.

All contributors to the Battle Creek Small Business Fund are partners, and eventually, we will all be partners in Battle Creek's success!

